

(Washington, D.C.) – U.S. Rep. Rush Holt (NJ-12) released the following statement today following President Obama's announcement of new executive orders and policy recommendations to reduce gun violence:

"For decades, too many in Washington have stood inactive as our schoolchildren and moviegoers and worshippers and police officers and so many others have been gunned down. This shameful, tragic inaction must end.

"President Obama has acted quickly and intelligently to identify steps that he can take on his own to reduce gun violence. But he is right to say that real progress will require Congress to act.

"First and foremost, we must enact a permanent ban on military-style assault weapons. Let's be clear: Congress must and will protect the right of law-abiding Americans to own firearms that are useful for sport or self-defense. But semi-automatic weapons and high-capacity magazines have no legitimate use whatsoever outside of police and military forces. These military-style assault weapons are useful only to criminals who wish to commit mass murder, and they should be banned once and for all.

"We must also make sensible investments in strengthening mental health care. To be clear, the NRA lobbyists who claim that this step alone is sufficient to rein in gun violence are self-serving and wrong-headed. Better access to mental health care will likely play only a modest role in preventing gun murders – but it could play a critical role in preventing gun suicides, which represent the majority of all gun deaths. Moreover, better mental health care in America is an end worth pursuing in itself.

"Finally, we must recognize the crucial role of law enforcement in preventing gun violence. In particular, the President is right to emphasize the value of school resource officers: specially trained law enforcement officers who work in schools every day. These resource officers do much more than just staff metal detectors or respond to violent crises. They work within schools day in and day out to build trust between students and teachers, create a culture of nonviolence, and strengthen respect for the law. We should invest in placing trained school resource officers in every school in America, and I plan to introduce legislation in the weeks ahead to help make that possible.

Holt Statement on President Obama's Proposal to Rein In Gun Violence

Wednesday, 16 January 2013 16:36

“To hear the stories of the little children and the teachers murdered in Newtown makes you want to cry. But even more than that, it should make us want to act.”